

Town of Whitestown, Indiana

COVID-19 Plan for a Safer Work Environment ("Plan")

updated 7/24/20

Overview: Our community, like communities across the state, country, and globe, is facing the severe health crisis caused by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Our focus is on the health and safety of our employees, officials, citizens, and visitors. This Plan provides guidance for safeguards to provide a safer work environment as we return to more normal operations as part of Governor Holcomb's Roadmap to Safely Reopen Indiana. Our understanding of COVID-19 is evolving and we are continuously monitoring Federal, State, CDC, OSHA, and other guidance for updates on responding to this global pandemic.

Under Governor Holcomb's Executive Order 20-26, local units of government will continue to decide how and when to reopen and provide services. This Plan describes measures and safeguards for providing a safer environment with respect to the risks of COVID-19.

All employees shall further follow any directives of the Town Manager relating to Town opening/closures, health procedures, social distancing, work attendance, and use of Town facilities. Town Administration will communicate reopening plans and work scheduling by separate communications.

Audience for Plan: Employees, officials, citizens, customers, and visitors. Employees are required to sign the Plan and return it to their supervisor.

Distribution of Plan: The plan is being provided to employees and officials, and it is being posted publicly and online.

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A. COVID-19 Symptoms and Spread

1. COVID-19 Symptoms

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness.

Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

[Children](#) have similar symptoms to adults and generally have mild illness.

This list is not all inclusive. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

2. How COVID-19 Spreads

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes. We are still learning more about this virus.

The virus that causes COVID-19 appears to spread very easily and sustainably between people. Information from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic suggest that this virus is spreading more efficiently than influenza, but not as efficiently as measles, which is highly contagious.

B. Social Distancing

Social distancing, also called “physical distancing,” means keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home. To practice social or physical distancing, to the extent practicable:

- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people
- Avoid gathering in groups
- Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings

Keeping space between yourself and others is one of the best tools to avoid being exposed to this virus and slowing its spread locally and across the country and world.

The Town will take steps to designate with signage, tape, or by other means, six feet of spacing for employees, citizens, and customers to maintain appropriate distance at Town facilities in areas where people often congregate.

C. Hand Washing and Personal Hygiene

All employees should thoroughly wash their hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds as frequently as possible. Always wash hands that are visibly soiled, after blowing one’s nose, after coughing, after sneezing, after using the restroom, and before eating or preparing food. CDC guidance on proper handwashing can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands. Employees should not shake hands. All employees should cover coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands).

To the extent available, the Town will provide protection supplies such as soap and water, hand sanitizer, tissues, and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by employees.

If soap and running water are not immediately available, employees should use alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60% alcohol. Additional hand sanitizer stations will also be provided where available.

D. Face Coverings

CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings to slow the spread of the virus and to help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

CDC Guidance on how to wear, clean, and make cloth face coverings is available here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.

Pursuant to Governor Holcomb's Executive Order 20-37, face coverings are now required for anyone 8 years old or older in the following places:

- Inside a business, public building, or other indoor place open to the public, excepting private offices, private workspaces, or meetings in which six feet of social distancing can be achieved and maintained between people not in the same household;
- Outdoor public spaces whenever it is not feasible to maintain six feet of social distancing from people not in the same household.

- While using public transportation or other vehicle services such as a taxi, private car service, or ride share;

Accordingly, because of the Governor's Order until further notice, all employees must wear facemask in hallways, meeting rooms, lobbies, gathering spaces, and other public spaces of Town facilities in which six feet of socially distancing is not maintained. Masks may be removed by employees when alone in an office or workspace. Guests in Town facilities must use a face covering at all times.

The following are exempt from the face covering mandate: when required for medical purposes, disabilities, strenuous physical activity, when eating and drinking, and any other exemption set forth in Executive Order 20-37.

All employees must further wear face coverings when interacting with a member of the public (indoors or within six feet outdoors) while on duty. Masks must be worn in any meetings (internal meetings or meetings with member of the public) with more than one participant in the same room. Where available, the Town will make disposable face coverings available to employees likely to interact with the public. The Town may also provide face coverings to other employees for internal use.

E. Self-Screening and Staying Home When Sick

All employees should stay home when sick. Sick employees should follow CDC-recommended steps. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>. Employees with COVID-19 should not return to work until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met, available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.

Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and follow CDC recommended precautions. Available at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhcp%2Fguidance-prevent-spread.html.

Each day before coming to work each employee must conduct a self-assessment to check if they have any COVID-19 type symptoms (fever, cough or shortness of breath). **In coming to Town facilities, the employee is representing to the Town that they have conducted a self-assessment and do not have a fever or COVID-19 symptoms.** If an employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, the employee must stay home, and after consultation with their doctor, be tested if deemed necessary.

Employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms should separate from other employees and be sent home immediately. Employees displaying signs and/or symptoms of COVID-19 should be immediately isolated in a designated area with closable doors until the potentially sick person can be removed from the worksite.

Employees should not return to work until they have recovered. All sick employees should stay home until they are free of fever (without the use of medication) for at least 72 hours (three full days) and symptoms have improved for at least 72 hours and at least seven days have passed since symptoms first began.

The Town understands that employees may need to stay at home to care for sick children or other sick family members more than is usual.

Employees should recognize personal risk factors. According to the CDC, certain people, including older adults and those with underlying conditions such as heart or lung disease or diabetes, are at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19. The CDC's list of people who need to take extra precautions is available here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>.

F. Working from Home and Workspaces

At this time, the Town will continue to allow more flexible schedules or working from home where possible. Each request to work from home must be reviewed and approved by the supervisor to ensure that the employee can reasonably

perform their duties from home during this limited time, that safeguards are in place so that the employee is working and productive during regular business hours, and that internal controls and security are not jeopardized. **Employees are reminded to review the Employee Handbook concerning working from home policies, and are reminded that while “on the clock,” they are expected to be working on Town business. Receiving compensation from the Town for doing non-Town tasks may constitute the crime of ghost employment.** Some employee functions may require working from the office, including but not limited to access to financial information. Employees should use teleconferencing and video conferencing whenever possible, even when in the office. Employees that must work in the office should limit the number of in-person meetings and limit the number of participants in meetings to the greatest extent possible. Employees should limit congregating in office spaces to the greatest extent possible.

Employees should not use other workers’ phones, desks, offices, work materials, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. Employee work stations should be spaced at least 6 feet apart. If this is not possible, a barrier should be created between workspaces.

The Town will maximize spacing at front desks and other reception areas that have high amounts of traffic. Where possible, the Town will install physical barriers, such as clear plastic sneeze guards, for customer service.

Employees should not congregate in break rooms or gathering spaces. Break rooms may be used for storing food when necessary (e.g., using refrigerators for storing lunch or microwaves to warm food), however employees should not eat in the break rooms. Employees are reminded that break room items such as refrigerators, microwaves, and coffee pots are high touch surfaces, and employees are therefore discouraged (but not prohibited) from using them. The Town will not allow self-service buffets in Town facilities.

Employees should limit non-essential business travel as much as possible.

To the extent possible, employee shifts may be staggered to reduce exposure to others.

The Town will enable natural workplace ventilation when possible.

G. Government Services and Facilities

Once the Municipal Complex opens to the public, the Town will offer special accommodations, such as special hours and/or after hour appointments upon request, for elderly and vulnerable customers to obtain Town services. The Town may also require all visits and/or meetings at Town facilities be by appointment only. The Town is designating with signage, tape, or by other means, six feet of spacing so that customers obtaining Town services at Town facilities can maintain proper social distancing.

To the greatest extent possible, the Town encourages citizens and customers to use online services, such as online utility payments.

Do not visit Town facilities if you are sick or were recently exposed to COVID-19.

Citizens visiting Town facilities are highly encouraged to follow CDC guidance on cloth face coverings and hand washing.

The Town is posting online whether facilities are open, how best to reach facilities, and how to obtain services by phone or online.

All meetings in Town conference rooms (scheduled or unscheduled) must be pre-approved by the Town Manager, Director of Operation, or Public Works Director until further notice.

H. Town Vehicles

To the extent practicable, employees are encouraged to limit the number of person in a Town vehicle at any time (except as permitted by the WPD or WFD for officers and firefighters).. Supervisors may implement specific department restrictions as warranted. Employees using a Town vehicle that may be used by other employees must clean the interior of the vehicle at the end of each shift

using the cleaning recommendations set forth below. Masks must be worn by each occupant when more than one occupant is in a Town vehicle.

I. Cleaning

The Town will frequently perform enhanced environmental cleaning of commonly touched surfaces, such as countertops, railings, doorknobs, light switches, tables, coffee pots, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc. Employees should regularly clean their workstations, including phones, keyboards, desks, and vehicles. The Town will make cleaning supplies available for employees to clean their workstations. The Town will also schedule office and other areas for deep cleaning.

Normal routine cleaning with soap and water will decrease how much of the virus is on surfaces and objects, which reduces the risk of exposure. Disinfection using EPA-approved disinfectants, available at <https://www.epa.gov/newsroom/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>, against COVID-19 can also help reduce the risk. Frequent disinfection of surfaces and objects touched by multiple people is important.

Always wear gloves appropriate for the chemicals being used when you are cleaning and disinfecting. Cleaning staff should wear appropriate PPE for cleaning and disinfecting. For more information for cleaning staff, visit the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's website on Control and Prevention: <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/controlprevention.html>. Additional guidance for cleaning and disinfecting can be found at the CDC's website: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/pdf/Reopening_America_Guidance.pdf.

For electronics, such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls, follow manufacturer's instruction for cleaning and disinfecting. If no cleaning guidance is provided, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol. Dry surface thoroughly.

Cleaning and disinfecting your building or facility if someone is sick:

- Close off areas used by the person who is sick.

- It may not be necessary to close operations if it is possible to close off affected areas.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Wait 24 hours before you clean or disinfect, but if 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and ATM machines.
- Vacuum the space if needed. Use a vacuum equipped with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, if available.
- Do not vacuum a room or space that has people in it. Wait until the room or space is empty to vacuum, such as at night for common spaces, or during the day for private rooms.
- Consider temporarily turning off room fans and the central HVAC system that services the room or space, so that particles that escape from vacuuming will not circulate throughout the facility.
- Once the area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.
- Workers without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.
- If more than 7 days has passed since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.
- Continue routine cleaning and disinfection. This includes everyday practices that businesses and communities normally use to maintain a healthy environment.

Cleaning and disinfecting outdoor areas:

- Outdoor areas, like playgrounds in parks, generally require normal routine cleaning, but do not require disinfection.
- Do not spray disinfectant on outdoor playgrounds- it is not an efficient use of supplies and is not proven to reduce risk of COVID-19 to the public.
- High touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, such as grab bars and railings should be cleaned routinely.

- Cleaning and disinfection of wooden surfaces (play structures, benches, tables) or groundcovers (mulch, sand) is not recommended.
- Sidewalks and roads should not be disinfected. Spread of COVID-19 from these surfaces is very low and disinfection is not effective.

Where available, the Town will provide disposable wipes so commonly used surfaces can be wiped down by employees before each use.

J. Social Gatherings

As the Town reopens, all public and private gatherings at government facilities should be limited when social distancing guidelines cannot be met. The Town may restrict non-Town personnel meetings at Town facilities to appointment only at any time. Employees are encouraged to continue to meet via teleconference or videoconference whenever possible.

K. Signage

The Town will post signage on COVID-19 safety guidelines and best practices in common areas. The Town will place signage stating the requirement of guests to socially distance and to visit when they are not ill. The Town will post signage in all restrooms regarding proper handwashing.

L. Travel Policy

Out of state work travel is prohibited without approval of the Town Manager.

For air travel:

Domestic Air Travel: Individuals may return to Town facilities without a COVID-19 test if they wore a mask in the airport, through TSA, and on the plane. Those who are unable to certify in writing that they adhered to these procedures must test negative before returning to Town facilities.

International Air Travel: Individuals must test negative for COVID-19 before returning to Town facilities.

M. Visiting Parks and Recreational Facilities

When opened to the public, Individuals may go to public parks and open outdoor recreation areas, provided they comply with social distancing requirements. If social distancing is maintained, individuals may engage in outdoor activities, such as walking, hiking, running, or biking at Town parks.

Know before you go: follow the steps below when using Town parks and recreation facilities to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

DO	DON'T
Visit parks that are close to your home	Visit parks if you are sick or were recently exposed to COVID-19
Prepare before you visit	Visit crowded parks
Stay at least 6 feet away from others ("social distancing")	Use playgrounds when closed to the public
Wash hands frequently or use hand sanitizer when hand washing is not possible.	Use hot tubs, spas, water playgrounds, or water parks when closed to the public

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